

THE LITERARY WORLD.

A Journal of American and Foreign Literature, Science, and Art.

WHOLE No. 65.
VOL. III. No. 13.

NEW YORK, APRIL 29, 1848.

THREE DOLLARS
PER ANNUM.

C. F. HOFFMAN, Editor.

OFFICE 157 BROADWAY.

OSGOOD & CO. PUBLISHERS.

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Sketches of American Life.

No. V.

KEY WEST.

"THE great masses of the population" have most indefinite ideas of where Key West is; some think it is south, and many are certain it is so: a few suppose it is part of the main land; but all agree in believing it the grand point of centralization for all storms that blow, and the great high court of judicature for wreckers.

Key West is undoubtedly an island; that has been ascertained by sailing round it, for no living thing ever went through the labyrinth of low shrubs that covers the greater part of its surface. It is about four miles long, and of a reasonable breadth; it is a bed of limestone, upheaved some twenty miles from the southern cape of Florida. On it the slow lapse of time has accumulated a deposit of soil, of the average depth of one inch; consequently no vegetables grow there, and all things are obtained from abroad. They grow their early peas in Carolina, and fatten their poultry in the North; green sea turtle is their beef, their drinking water is rain water: their game is all potted, and their fruits preserved.

Yet, Key West, in approaching it from the Gulf shore of Florida, presents a pleasant sight if your eyes have been used for months to the wildness of the interior; even when in it you can scarcely believe you are not below low tide water, and when approaching it, you certainly will run down that warehouse that is built from out the Gulf unless your course is quickly changed. The sea comes up to other places, but it comes into Key West; it is high water in the middle of the town; but the ebb and flow of the tide from the shallows that extend back of the island to the Florida shore, is but some two or three feet. I explored an old fashioned, wide porched, peak roofed building, perched on pillars of stone in the sea, and connected to the island by a narrow bridge running from the main entrance. Between the chambers was a bath house, or more properly speaking, a hole cut in the floor with steps leading down to the water; in the main apartment "cycle and epicycle, orb in orb," was a house within a house; its owner had imprisoned himself where even mosquitoes could not break through to sting. On the outer frame for a very small chamber, he had stretched a netting; he had a door thereto, and safely at rest within defied all the armies of mosquitoes that campaign at Key West.

If you are cast away by some misfortune into Key West, you rest from your labors by sea, in a boarding house on land; for hotels there are none in the town. Here, however, your vexations are multiplied; mosquitoes keep you in terror for your own identity, and flies blunder into your ears and eyes if you walk

out of doors, and houseflies within occupy all the otherwise unfilled regions of space; eating and drinking become the duties of life; your first course at dinner is turtle soup, second course turtle steaks, third course turtle chops.

The Spanish language is spoken by every one, and Spanish manners and beauties take precedence. I saw in the sandy streets some exquisitely beautiful creatures, with a most delicate Andalusian tinge, and flashing eyes, and hair that had descended to them as dowries, from their Granada mothers. The world after all is filled with beauty, if you will but see it; and in this remote foothold of men, the human face divine smiles on you with the transparent light of a still Florida lake, and human forms move by, with the miniature proportions of a stately pine. They have hospitality, too, these Key West people; if you should happen to serenade a bewitching little Spanish girl, who has led you captive from the first hour you saw her, there is not the slightest doubt but her father would arise, insist on seeing the light of your presence within his halls, and treat you to an accompaniment of musical glasses, more substantial than the ethereal harmonies that lately were evolved in the open air.

You may have remarked in travelling even into the most unhappy spots on the face of the earth, when you have made up your mind that you are the first person who has ever been there, that you are soon convinced of your error;—there are others before, "*Spending the season in this quiet place.*" This was the way at Key West; and once even in the woods of Florida a horrid dyspeptic, who was flying after health, lighted upon me; yet your laugh is changed to sorrow on seeing the feeble step and encountering the mild brilliant glance of the consumptive, travelling, alas! too late, from the friendly home, to the warm climate, and cold ministering of strangers.

Let Key West be what it will in a social view, it is the Aden and Gibraltar of the Union in a military one; it is the apparent protecting point of a line of sea coast extending four hundred miles on the Atlantic shore, and some five or six hundred on the Gulf of Mexico. In position, it is much beyond any other site in the country; every other Port of the coast is in line; this is at the extreme point of a peninsula putting into the Atlantic, looking out on the open sea it is true; but safely shielded from all its violence, by the reef that encircles the whole of the islands round the southern point of the Territory.

Florida is valuable on account of its position; it is an integral part of the Union; it was essential to complete the line of sea coast from Maine to Louisiana, and as such ought to have been in possession of the country at any cost; but for any abstract value, it is not worth half a million of dollars. The soil of the northern part of the peninsula when proper for any kind of cultivation is in small plots, at long and uncertain intervals apart, covered with a heavy growth of timber, or underwood, exposed to a hot sun, and all the disadvantages

of southern latitudes; below the 27° it is a marsh, three-tenths of the surface is water at all seasons, and for centuries it will be unfit for any practical use.

Florida will chiefly benefit the West and South; she is a barrier stretched into the sea for the protection of the immense shipping interests of New Orleans, Mobile, and the long line of coast from Key West to the Sabine, and now beyond it. Cuba in the possession of a weak power; the islands of Key West and Tortugas in the ownership of the United States; will leave the narrow strait of eighty miles between these islands and Havannah, free for the passage of vessels, freighted with the rich products of the South, and will be of avail as a very effectual barrier against the blockade of any of the Ports on this southern boundary.

That these islands have not been strongly fortified before this, is a matter of astonishment to any one who knows their geography, with that knowledge which personal inspection only gives. They bear very nearly the same relation to the Ports of the Gulf, that the Fort at the mouth of a river does to the city it protects high up the stream. They would serve in time of need, as points of rendezvous, of depots for stores, of protection for ships and privateers, and for offensive operations. They could be supplied through the Northern parts of the Territory, by means of a short communication by sea from Tampa Bay, Pensacola, or the many Ports on the Gulf, into which immense supplies of all kinds, from the South and West, could be thrown with the inexhaustible resources of these parts of the country, in men, provisions, shipping materials, and necessities of war of all kinds. An enemy's fleet could remain but a short time in the confined boundary enclosed by Florida and the Southern coast, Cuba, Mexico, and Yucatan.

There is a powerful breakwater sweeping round the whole southern boundary of Key West. Nature took the contract for it, and it was not left half finished; it is just beneath the surface, and of course hidden from your eyes; but with a storm on the waves in the sea beyond it, you ride with safety in a skiff in the harbor of Key West. It is the same with the islands of Tortugas; their various passages inward admit vessels of the largest class, and when moored there, they ride safely, though looking out to the open sea on nearly all sides.

The ocean is directly before the Northern sea-ports, and no blockade of one can interfere with that of another; not so with the ports of the Gulf of Mexico. Their immense exports must all pass through the narrow strait by the Tortugas and Key West. In the passage by the Caribbean Sea, the first flowings of the Gulf stream are a check to navigation, and ships are not beyond the sound of British guns. With a large depot at Tortugas, a serious blockade of a town on the Gulf would scarcely be attempted. Two-thirds of the exports of the country pass by these Florida islands.

The reefs along this coast are composed of

ledges of coral; the principal one runs parallel with the islands which extend from one to twenty or thirty miles from the main land. After leaving Key West in sailing east, if you go inside the reef as it is called, you pass close to these islands, running along for eighty miles in the arc of a circle, and on your right towards the open sea, the coral reef extends parallel to the line of the islands, and from six to ten miles from them; portions of it are to be seen at low water, though it is generally covered, and is from one to ten feet below the surface. The navigation within the reef is dangerous and shallow; it requires a pilot who understands the position of the shoals, and in passing along I have seen the dark hues cast by rocks or shoals just beneath the water, appearing like shadows cast from a cloud. This is the reef on which so many vessels are stranded, and within it safely skimming by is the wrecking schooner.

These "wreckers," as they are called, are probably twenty in number. They are generally owned in Key West, are well manned, carry all sail even in a stiff breeze, the captain and crew paid in shares from the profits, and are constantly sailing along within the reef, on the look-out for vessels stranded during the preceding night; or now bearing down in the direction of danger. Many ships become lightly grounded on the reef, and escape again by their own exertions; but the majority that touch it, are in so leaky a condition when again afloat, that they are fain compelled to seek the assistance of the wrecker, who has lain beside them at anchor and within talking distance all the time, until his services should be demanded. Generally, however, if a vessel strikes, the Captain at once surrenders her to the wreckers (the first one who has reached her having preference). She is unloaded, or sufficiently so to ease her off, and carried to Key West for repairs, or condemnation if too much injured; here, commissioners, and the Admiralty Court take her in charge, and award the percentage on her cargo, and value for the salvage, for the labor and time of the wrecker. Although this percentage is often large, yet when all things are considered it is not high; many lives and valuable cargoes are saved by the exertions of these wreckers; their gains are very precarious; they are under law and rule; they are subject to the most terrible abuse; winds that blow them no good are direct benefits to the rest of the world: and for all these things they ought to be paid.

The islands that are stretched along the whole southern coast east of Key West, do not support fifty families; there is some rich land on them, on which the banana, cocoa-nut, and plantain will grow; but they are covered with mangrove, lignum vitæ, crab-wood, and gumbo-limbo trees, and very few acres are under culture. One of the smallest of these islands is Indian Key. It is about the size of a large garden; it is formed entirely of coral rock—has one or two families living upon it, and during the Florida war was well known as a depot for naval stores, and the scene of the massacre of its inhabitants by the descent of a party of Seminoles in canoes, about the commencement of the war. It was here that Dr. Perrine had established his garden, containing some of the choicest tropical plants and fruits; it was all a waste and overrun with weeds, however, when I saw it, save that a rich blooming flower would here and there appear amid the desolation around.

R. S. H.

St. Louis, Mo., Feb., 1848.

Reviews.

Pearls of American Poetry. Illuminated by T. W. Gwilt Mapleson. Second edition. John Wiley, 161, Broadway, and George P. Putnam, 155, Broadway.

OPENING upon another illuminated quarto which lies before us, side by side with the above, "Philip van Arteveld haranguing the people," is the first plate that reaches our eye, as copied in splendid colors from the illuminations of the MS. Froissart in the Bibliothèque Royale of Paris. Then follows the scene of the Earl of Flanders soliciting the aid of France to interfere in his country's affairs, and the display at the fatal battle of Rosebecque, of the Flemish men-at-arms, with their trades-union banners floating over them. There is the saw, the hammer, the mallet, and shoemaker's last blazoned in gold, upon grounds of crimson and blue, and gleaming over the mailed heads of the Belgic patriots, and the knights of France, some in tricolor surcoats, with lances in rest, preparing to charge upon them.

Several centuries have passed away, and within a few weeks we have again seen Flemish emissaries following the example of the Earl of Flanders, appealing to the government of the French capital to invade their country. The Belgic noble of three hundred years back made his appeal in the name of "aristocracy;" the Belgic republican of thirty days ago implored similar interference in the name of "democracy." The ancient earl, and the modern club which burned their national flag in Paris, are entitled to like respect, for inviting strangers to interfere in the domestic affairs of their own land. Each in their day got the feeble sympathy of their time. Each in after days will receive alike the scorn of the annalist for offering to act as pioneers to the invaders of their native soil. The forms of government,—the modes of transacting the political business of society,—will probably vary and fluctuate in the next three thousand years as they did in the three thousand years that preceded them. The complete democracy of Athens, the only actual democratic government that ever existed (our own being a representative democracy), may flourish again in all the cities of Europe. The older patriarchal forms of Palestine may come up; the still older system of communism, as known to some Asiatic tribes, or some of the South Sea Indians, may, for a generation or so, meet with a civilized preference, and resolve itself again in turn into the discipline of Hindoo castes, based upon trades and occupations. But men, so long as they are men, will still continue to hold in scorn the renegade who invites the invader among them to force any of these forms of society upon his countrymen, however eligible the change may be when developed among themselves; and when this sentiment dies out we may despair of a people being capable of self-government, for the spirit which can alone give vitality to the reasoning principles upon which such a government is based, must be dead within them. A system of republics over Europe, all feudalized to the French people as the suzeraine democracy of them all, would be a mere change as to the location of the "privileged class" of Christendom. The privileged class would still have an existence for every other nation, but it would originate outside of their own borders. The nobility of all Europe once fraternized together against the people of all Europe.

Their kings have often co-operated in the same way. The people are now fraternizing together after a similar fashion. When kings and nobles triumphed in the conflict, the different members of the confederated powers always came out of the struggle with widely different shares of the spoils. So will it be with THE PEOPLES!—for Lamartine's far-sighted assertion of the *inviolability of nationhood*, though so often repeated by him in speeches and state papers, has not (so far as we have seen) been once echoed by his coadjutors of the Provisional Government—the strangest oligarchy, by the way, that the world has ever seen, and which, though retained only as a wetnurse for the suckling republic, plays the double part of governess and housekeeper with singular activity, by anticipating many measures which, according to an American view of such matters, should be settled only by the National Convention; the said Provisional Government—established only to keep the peace until a new national legislature should come together—being, in fact, representatives of the sentiment of only one city of the size of New York, in an empire containing twice the population of the United States.

But we live in an age of illumination, and this brings us back to the subject from which Froissart's suggestive to blazonry has caused us to wander so widely.

The art of ornamenting manuscripts in gold, silver, and colors, which prevailed in Europe from the fourth to the sixteenth centuries, has been revived of late years with great success in England. Minium, which perhaps three thousand years ago gave name to the "Vermilion Edict" of the Celestial Empire, assuredly at that time enriched the borders of the Egyptian papyri. The idea of the sacred *ty. anetov* of the Greeks was probably, with other good things, borrowed from the latter source, though traced generally by writers only to the days of the lower empire; the Romans having meanwhile in Pliny's days learned to rubricate their MSS. Early revived by the Christians alike in Syria and Southern Europe, and even in remote Ireland, the sixteenth century, in giving the illuminated missals of Julio Clavio to the world, brought the art to its perfection; while in the century which succeeded the art of illumination became once more confined to the themes which in modern times had called it anew into being—the decoration of religious or heraldic volumes. The partial use of heraldic emblems has still kept it from dying out entirely until the present *renaissance*, which as applied in a thousand forms is not unlikely to become finally a prominent art, instead of a fluctuating caprice of fancy. The publishers of the present volume deserve much credit for their share in advancing the progress of the art in this country.

We may add that it is a great proof of the progress of elegant taste among us that the most splendid volume yet published in America should so soon have reached a second edition. The success of "The Pearls," with Mr. Mapleson's sumptuous illuminations, seems to resolve the problem as to how far the public will encourage typographical luxury when lavished with no restriction save that of the most approved taste. Ten years ago, and a book like this would have been an attractive curiosity for the cases of a public museum; and now, from the success of this bold attempt to anticipate public taste, its accomplished author will feel warranted in bringing further results of his rare and curious endowment

before the public. At least he ought so to feel from the reception his present labors have met with. We cannot help, American-wise, adding here an improving suggestion which must thrust itself upon the minds of many a utilitarian reader. It is that the exquisite tracery and rare devices of taste, which makes a work like this a revel of fancy, must have a quickening effect upon many of the useful arts. The figures of carpets, of calicoes, and various miscellanea that the people of the markets talk about, *must* borrow new grace, freshness, and variety, from "patterns" here suggested. They must do so, and they will do so, upon the same principle that the classic forms of ancient vases found at Pompeii, have passed into modern teapots and cream bowls, through the ministrations of Wedgwood.

Wuthering Heights. By the Author of "Jane Eyre." Harper & Brothers, 1848.

THE extraordinary popularity of "Jane Eyre" will give this book a reputation which it would not, perhaps, have otherwise acquired for itself. Few of those who read that work will find in this a worthy successor, for, although possessing far more strength and power in its darker portions, yet it lacks the relief necessary to make it as pleasing as "Jane Eyre." It is "a dark tale darkly told;" a book that seizes upon us with an iron grasp, and makes us read its story of passions and wrongs whether we will or no. Fascinated by strange magic we read what we dislike, we become interested in characters which are most revolting to our feelings, and are made subject to the immense power, of the book,—a rough, shaggy, uncouth power that turns up the dark side of human nature, and deals with unbridled passions and hideous inhumanities. In the whole story not a single trait of character is elicited which can command our admiration, not one of the fine feelings of our nature seems to have formed a part in the composition of its principal actors; and yet, spite of this, spite of the disgusting coarseness of much of the dialogue, and the improbabilities and incongruities of the plot, we are spell-bound, we cannot choose but read. As a specimen of the whole character of the book the following extract will, we think, give a fair estimate of its various peculiarities, its strange power, its coarse feeling, its unnatural characters, and its dark fascination:—

"Mrs. Linton bent forward, and listened breathlessly. The minute after a step traversed the hall; the open house was too tempting for Heathcliff to resist walking in: most likely he supposed that I was inclined to shirk my promise, and so resolved to trust to his own audacity.

"With straining eagerness Catherine gazed towards the entrance of her chamber. He did not hit the right room directly; she motioned me to admit him; but he found it out ere I could reach the door, and in a stride or two was at her side, and had her grasped in his arms.

"He neither spoke nor loosed his hold for some five minutes, during which period he bestowed more kisses than ever he gave in his life before, I dare say; but then my mistress had kissed him first, and I plainly saw that he could hardly bear, for downright agony, to look into her face! The same conviction had stricken him as me, from the instant he beheld her, that there was no prospect of ultimate recovery there—she was fated, sure to die.

"Oh, Cathy! Oh, my life! how can I bear it!" was the first sentence he uttered, in a tone that did not seek to disguise his despair.

"And now he stared at her so earnestly that I thought the very intensity of his gaze would

bring tears into his eyes; but they burned with anguish, they did not melt.

"What now?" said Catherine, leaning back, and returning his look with a suddenly clouded brow—her humor was a mere vane for constantly varying caprices. "You and Edgar have broken my heart, Heathcliff! And you both come to bewail the deed to me, as if you were the people to be pitied! I shall not pity you, not I! You have killed me—and thriven on it, I think. How strong you are! How many years do you mean to live after I am gone?"

"Heathcliff had knelt on one knee to embrace her; he attempted to rise, but she seized his hair, and kept him down.

"I wish I could hold you," she continued, bitterly, "till we were both dead! I shouldn't care what you suffered! I care nothing for your sufferings. Why shouldn't you suffer? I do! Will you forget me—will you be happy when I am in the earth? Will you say, twenty years hence, 'That's the grave of Catherine Earnshaw. I loved her long ago, and was wretched to lose her; but it is past. I've loved many others since—my children are dearer to me than she was; and, at death, I shall not rejoice that I am going to her, I shall be sorry that I must leave them!' Will you say so, Heathcliff?"

"Don't torture me till I'm as mad as yourself," cried he, wrenching his head free, and grinding his teeth.

"The two, to a cool spectator, made a strange and fearful picture. Well might Catherine deem that Heaven would be a land of exile to her, unless, with her mortal body, she cast away her mortal character also. Her present countenance had a wild vindictiveness in its white cheek, and bloodless lip, and scintillating eye; and she retained in her closed fingers a portion of the locks she had been grasping. As to her companion, while raising himself with one hand, he had taken her arm with the other; and so inadequate was his stock of gentleness to the requirements of her condition, that on his letting go, I saw four distinct impressions left blue in the colorless skin.

"Are you possessed with a devil," he pursued, savagely, "to talk in that manner to me, when you are dying? Do you reflect that all those words will be branded in my memory, and eating deeper eternally, after you have left me? You know you lie to say I have killed you; and, Catherine, you know that I could as soon forget you as my existence! Is it not sufficient for your infernal selfishness that while you are at peace I shall writhe in the torments of hell?"

"I shall not be at peace," moaned Catherine, recalled to a sense of physical weakness, by the violent, unequal throbbing of her heart, which beat, visibly and audibly, under this excess of agitation.

"She said nothing further till the paroxysm was over; then she continued, more kindly—

"I'm not wishing you greater torment than I have, Heathcliff! I only wish us never to be parted—and should a word of mine distress you hereafter, think I feel the same distress underground, and for my own sake, forgive me! Come here and kneel down again! You never harmed me in your life. Nay, if you nurse anger, that will be worse to remember than my harsh words! Won't you come here again? Do!"

"Heathcliff went to the back of her chair, and leaned over, but not so far as to let her see his face, which was livid with emotion. She bent round to look at him; he would not permit it; turning abruptly, he walked to the fireplace, where he stood silent, with his back towards us.

"Mrs. Linton's glance followed him suspiciously; every movement woke a new sentiment in her. After a pause, and a prolonged gaze, she resumed, addressing me in accents of indignant disappointment.

"Oh, you see, Nelly! he would not relent a moment, to keep me out of the grave! That is how I'm loved! Well, never mind! That is not my Heathcliff. I shall love mine yet; and take him with me—he's in my soul. And," added she, musingly, "the thing that irks me most

is this shattered prison, after all. I'm tired, tired of being inclosed here. I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world, and to be always there; not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart: but really with it, and in it. Nelly, you think you are better and more fortunate than I; in full health and strength—you are sorry for me—very soon that will be altered. I shall be sorry for you. I shall be incomparably beyond and above you all. I wonder he won't be near me!" She went on to herself. "I thought he wished it. Heathcliff, dear! you should not be sullen now. Do come to me, Heathcliff!"

"In her eagerness, she rose and supported herself on the arm of the chair. At that earnest appeal, he turned to her, looking absolutely desperate. His eyes wide, and wet at last, flashed fiercely on her; his breath heaved convulsively. An instant they held asunder; and then how they met I hardly saw, but Catherine made a spring, and he caught her, and they were locked in an embrace from which I thought my mistress would never be released alive. In fact, to my eyes, she seemed directly insensible. He flung himself into the nearest seat, and on my approaching hurriedly to ascertain if she had fainted, he gnashed at me, and foamed like a mad dog, and gathered her to him with greedy jealousy. I did not feel as if I were in the company of a creature of my own species; it appeared that he would not understand, though I spoke to him; so I stood off and held my tongue, in great perplexity.

"A movement of Catherine's relieved me a little presently: she put up her hand to clasp his neck, and bring her cheek to his, as he held her; while he, in return, covering her with frantic caresses, said, wildly—

"You teach me now how cruel you've been—cruel and false. Why did you despise me? Why did you betray your own heart, Cathy? I have not one word of comfort—you deserve this. You have killed yourself. Yes, you may kiss me, and cry; and wring out my kisses and tears. They'll blight you—they'll damn you. You loved me—then what right had you to leave me? What right—answer me—for the poor fancy you felt for Linton? Because misery, and degradation, and death, and nothing that God or Satan could inflict would have parted us, you, of your own will, did it. I have not broken your heart—you have broken it—and in breaking it, you have broken mine. So much the worse for me, that I am strong. Do I want to live? What kind of living will it be when you—Oh, God, would you live with your soul in the grave?"

"Let me alone. Let me alone," sobbed Catherine. "If I've done wrong, I'm dying for it. It is enough! You left me too; but I won't upbraid you! I forgive you. Forgive me!"

"It is hard to forgive, and to look at those eyes, and feel those wasted hands," he answered. "Kiss me again; and don't let me see your eyes. I forgive what you have done to me. I love my murderer—but yours! How can I?"

"They were silent—their faces hid against each other, and washed by each other's tears. At least, I suppose the weeping was on both sides; as it seemed Heathcliff could weep on a great occasion like this."

The book, throughout, is characterized by the same mind whose peculiarities of thought and expression are stamped upon the work of "Currer Bell," but we know not by what authority our worthy American publishers have explicitly named it as being by the author of "Jane Eyre," in as much as in the English advertisement *Wuthering Heights* purports to be by "Ellis Bell." A third work of similar style and character has just appeared abroad entitled "Agnes Grey," by "Acton Bell."

We ought, before this, to have acknowledged the handsome and convenient edition of "Jane Eyre," which has been issued by Wilkins, Carter & Co., of Boston.

THE EARLY DRAMA, MYSTERIES, MORALITIES,
&c. &c.

In considering this very important branch of literature, the early drama, it will be necessary to preface, that the title of *Comedy*, in the early part of the fourteenth century, was applied to any short poem distinguished by satire, or intended to excite merriment or ridicule.

The *Comedia de Geta*, in the Bodleian manuscript, is in Latin long and short verses, and has no marks of dialogue. In the library of Corpus Christi, at Cambridge, is another satirical ballad in the same tongue, in which the name of Falstaff is introduced, entitled "*Comedia ad monasterium de Hulme*," &c. The nature of Dante's *Comedy*, as it was styled by him, is well known. The comedies ascribed to Chaucer are undoubtedly his "*Canterbury Tales*."

In the prologue to the "*Monke's Tale*," this poet has shown that narratives or poems, with a fatal or disastrous termination, were called *Tragedies*; and Lydgate further confirms these statements as regards both comedy and tragedy. This custom was continued even so late as the sixteenth century, the stories in the "*Mirror of Magistrates*" being there called *tragedies*.

Warton, however, notices that dramatic entertainments, representing the lives of saints, and the most prominent features in scripture history, were known in England for more than two centuries before the reign of Edward II. These spectacles were commonly styled *Miracles*; the play or miracle of St. Catharine, we further learn, was acted at Dunstable about the year 1110.

The late Mr. Richard Price of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, suggests, however, that the plays of Hroswitha, a nun of Gandersheim, in Lower Saxony, who lived towards the close of the tenth century, may, perhaps, afford the earliest specimens of dramatic composition, since the decline of the Roman empire. "They were," he adds, "professedly written for the benefit of those Christians, who, abjuring all other heathen writers, were irresistibly attracted by the graces of Terence, to the imminent danger of their spiritual welfare, and the certain pollution of their moral feelings."

In Fitzstephen's "*Description of London*," written in the twelfth century, it is stated that "London, for its theatrical exhibitions, had holy plays, or the representation of miracles wrought by confessors, and of the sufferings of martyrs." That these plays were in high estimation at this period, we have the confirmatory words of Matthew Paris, who, writing in 1240, says they were "*Miracula vulgariter apellamus*." William de Waddington, probably a contemporary of Paris, left, as we are informed by Mr. Price, a violent tirade against this general practice of acting miracles. In Chaucer's time, however, *Plays of Miracles* were the common resort of idle gossips in Lent, and these fashionable diversions he has pointed out, in making them the amusement of his "*Wife of Bath*." In *Piers Plowman's Crede*, a poem anterior, perhaps, to those of Chaucer, a friar Minorite mentions these *Miracles* as "not less frequented than markets or taverns."

Prior to 1355 the Drama seems to have been almost entirely confined to religious subjects; and these plays can only be regarded as an appendage to the specious and mechanical devotion of the times. No profane (in contradistinction to religious) representation, either comic or tragic, had yet been exhibited in England; the pageants, on occasion of triumphant entries by kings or queens to the city of London, and other places, being almost entirely scriptural; in fact, our very early ances-

tors knew scarcely any other history than that of their religion.

The list of dresses and paraphernalia in the wardrobe rolls of Edward III., in the year 1348, on occasion of the Christmas plays and sports before the king in the castle of Guildford, seem to afford the appearance of a change in the style of representation, partaking more of the *masque*. In the wardrobe lists of Richard II., 1391, there is also an entry "for XXI linen coifs for counterfeiting men of the law in the king's play at Xmas." It has not, however, been ascertained whether these were interludes with speeches, or consisted entirely of action or "dumb show."

The first exhibitions in England assuming a really dramatic character were the *Miracle Plays* or *Mysteries*; they were wholly destitute of plan or invention, but tamely represented passages from the Bible, or the respective legend. The *Moralities*, however, from their frequently requiring the introduction of allegorical characters as Charity, Sin, Death, Faith, Hope, &c., plainly indicate dawnings of the dramatic art. They also differed from the *Mysteries*, in containing some rudiments of a plot, and even an attempt to delineate character, and glance at the manners of the day.

Many licentious freedoms were sometimes introduced in these religious dramas, which a more enlightened age would not have permitted from a feeling of respect and reverence for the source from whence these representations were borrowed. It must, however, be remembered, that no impiety was intended, the people considering that "the solemnity of the subject covered all incongruities," and "as the age possessed no just ideas of decorum, and consequently but little sense of the ridiculous," what appears to us offensive and unseemly, on them "would have made no sort of impression."

These religious dramas were performed or represented on festivals and holidays, in or about the churches; and from this ecclesiastical origin of the modern drama, plays continued to be acted on Sundays so late as the reign of Elizabeth, and even to the usurpation of Cromwell, by the choristers or singing-boys of the Chapel-royal, and St. Paul's.

In some instances puppets were employed by the priestly dramatists, in the representation of the *Nativity*, *Passion*, &c.

From a proclamation of Bonner, Bishop of London, in the reign of Henry VIII., 1542, it appears that these theatrical exhibitions in churches became greatly offensive to the clergy, and they were accordingly prohibited by their metropolitan, as regards the desecration of churches, chapels, &c.; and more than twenty years afterwards (1563), Archbishop Grindal remonstrated against the players of these interludes, complaining "that they did, especially on holidays, set up bills inviting to their play."

In accordance with the more lively imaginations of the French, we find that the profane (or worldly) drama was known by that nation at a much earlier period. Warton cites Du Cange for a description of an entertainment prior to 1300, which was celebrated on the occasion of the French King dining in public. All the great officers of the crown and household were present; the company was entertained with the instrumental music of the minstrels, and in addition to this was added the drolleries of "*les Farceurs et jongleurs, et leurs comedies*."

Many noble families, adds Du Cange, were

entirely ruined by the prodigious expenses lavished on these performers.

Buffoons are mentioned among the minstrels at these "solemnities," as far back as the time of Louis le Debonnaire, who reigned about the year 830; and who, it is further said, never laughed aloud, not even when at the most magnificent festivals, players, buffoons, minstrels, &c., attended at his table.

The establishment of the first French theatre is not dated prior to 1398, although the words "*spectaculis, nuptiis, aut in scenis exhibentur, intersit*," as introduced in the constitution of a cathedral church in the year 1280, seem to imply a much earlier recognition of a professed stage.

A modern French antiquary (M. Roquefort), writes Mr. Price, has claimed a much higher antiquity for the establishment or origin of the French stage, than the date now presented (1398); though upon principles which have a tendency to confound all distinctions between the several kinds of poetic composition. The conclusions of M. Roquefort appear anything but satisfactory, and wholly deficient in authority. "However," adds Mr. Price, "should this theory (of M. R.'s) obtain, Solomon, Bishop of Constance in the tenth century, will perhaps rank as the earliest dramatist at present known."

In 1392 the schoolboys of Angiers are said to have performed *Le Jeu de Robin et de Marion*, "according to annual custom," and in 1378, at a royal entertainment given by Charles V., of France, to the emperor, Charles IV., the theatrical representation of the "*Conquest of Jerusalem*, by Godfrey of Bulloign," was exhibited in the hall of the royal palace. This was decidedly founded on a religious subject; but in the year 1395, we find the *Patient Grisilde* was acted in Paris, which piece is still in existence, and is entitled, in conformity with the customs of those days, "*Le Mystere de Grisildis, Marquise de Saluce*," the age not having progressed sufficiently to classify or discriminate the necessary distinction between "*St. Catherine or Hercules, a martyr, or a heathen god*."

These French religious *Mysteries*, often designated *Piteaux* or *Pitours*, were much encouraged, and are certainly of a high antiquity, though possibly not of an earlier date than those of England.

The people sometimes officiated in these representations; but in 1398 some citizens of Paris having announced "*La Passion de Jesu Christ*" for representation at St. Maur, the magistracy, alarmed at the novelty, published an ordinance forbidding all representations from the lives of the saints or other holy books, without the royal license. This, however, was soon afterwards obtained, and it may be regarded as establishing the first legitimate theatricals in France, the actors being incorporated by the king under the title of the "*Fraternity of the Passion of our Saviour*."

In 1455 the chaplains of Abbeville gave an amount equivalent to "four pounds and ten shillings" to the "*Players of the Passion*;" and in 1486 "ten pounds" were paid at Anjou towards supporting the charges of acting "*The Passion*," which was represented by masques, supposed by Warton "by persons hired for the purpose."

The chief performers of these French *Mysteries* were, however, the members of the different religious communities, some of their "*fetes*" almost entirely consisting of dramatic or personated representations.

At the famous "*Feast of Asses*," instituted in honor of Balaam's ass, the clergy walked on

Christmas day in procession, and habited *en costume*. Moses appears in an alb and cope, with a long beard and staff. David was clad in a vestment of green. Balaam wore an immense pair of spurs, riding on the wooden figure of an ass, "which enclosed a speaker." Six Jews also, and a like number of Gentiles, appeared in the procession. Among other characters the poet Virgil was introduced as a "Gentile prophet, and a translator of the Sibylline oracles." During the procession through the body of the church, the characters chanted "versicles," and maintained an appropriate dialogue on the Nativity, &c., till they came into the choir. Virgil also spoke some Latin hexameters, "not, however, from his fourth eclogue," writes Warton, "but wretched monkish lines in rhyme."

At the "Feast of Fools," the clergy danced in masks and antic dresses, and introduced such unseemly and indecent jests and actions, under cover of their visors, that in 1445, Charles VII. directed the masters in theology of Paris to forbid the ministers of their collegiate churches to celebrate this fête. So corrupt had been the influence of these spectacles, that some of the nuns in the French convents are said to have "had *Ludibria* on St. Mary Magdalene's, and other festivals, when they wore the habits of seculars, and danced with them."

La Fête de Fous differed from La Fête de Sotise, the former being distinguished for its indecency, while the latter was especially an entertainment of dancing—*les saultes*, thence corrupted into *soties* or *sotise*.

The *Episcopus Puerorum*, or "Feast of the Boy-bishop," was also observed in France as well as in England, and about the same period, St. Nicholas day. This festival is recorded in the statutes of Eton College, 1441, and in those of Winchester College, in 1380. This strange piece of religious mockery flourished greatly in Salisbury cathedral. One of the choir-boys on this day, apparelled in the episcopal vestments, with mitre, crosier, &c., took possession of the priestly office, performing all the ceremonies, mass excepted, and exacting canonical obedience from all his fellows, who were habited as his attendant clergy. The restrictions of the government appear to have had the desired effect in correcting the scandalous license formerly exhibited in these representations, as we find by the statutes of the archiepiscopal cathedral of Tulle of the year 1497, that during the celebration of the festival of the boy-bishop, "Moralities were presented, and shows of Miracles, with farces and other sports, but compatible with decorum." After dinner they exhibited "without their masks, but in proper dresses, such farces as they were masters of, in different parts of the city."

A patient examination of the early French and English stages will thus be found to afford, by comparison, a mutual intelligence, and serve to explain many difficulties which would otherwise prove serious obstacles to the perfect understanding of either. Every portion of our history bearing any affinity to our subject of investigation, however minute and unimportant they may at first appear, requires a patient and careful analysis, for, as Warton most justly observed, "even traces should be attended to!"

The modern drama has thus been shown to have had its foundation in our religion, and that it was raised and supported by the clergy, who were, in fact, "almost the only persons who could read," and while their numbers easily furnished performers, they abounded in leisure, and their very relaxations assimilated to the time and feelings of their professional character.

Home Correspondence.

PHILADELPHIA, April 18, 1848.

I HAVE turned away from my office window,—I have resolutely drawn down the blind, for how could I write with beautiful faces flitting before me? How else could I turn from the crowded *paré*, thronged as it is with the comeliest of our belles? In my Utopia it shall be always spring,—balmy, delicious spring; for never are dear woman's eyes more bright—never is her cheek suffused with a more beautiful carnation, than when shaded with the light fabrics they then assume, and in contrast to their delicate hues.

Speaking of fair ladies, have you heard of the simultaneous movement on the part of Philadelphia publishers, to do justice and honor to those who have genius as well as beauty? I have reference to the three books commenced for the fall trade by E. H. BUTLER & Co., CAREY & HART, and LINDSAY & BLAKISTON. The first, entitled "Portraits of the Female Poets" was suggested some time since by its editor, T. B. Read, the poet artist, as some have called him. It is to be an elegant volume of several hundred pages. The principal feature of the publication is the embellishments, nine portraits of those most generally known among our lady authors, which are to be engraved from original pictures by the editor. Mrs. Oakes Smith will probably form the frontispiece. Mrs. Osgood is gracefully placed as a *vignette*. Among the portraits already complete are a striking picture of Mrs. Embury, Mrs. Hale, Mrs. Ellet, Mrs. Kinney, Anne C. Lynch, and Grace Greenwood, who is appropriately delineated in a riding habit; the cap and plumes are decidedly becoming, and shade the face with a very fine effect. The last is probably the most spirited sketch of the wondrous nine. The letter-press portraits of the less fortunate sisterhood will, I doubt not, be as gracefully drawn by the pen of Mr. Reed, as those I have mentioned are by his pencil. A selection from the poems of each lady included accompanies a short biographical notice.

The volume to be issued by LINDSAY & BLAKISTON is similar in design, with the exception of the embellishments; however, a kind of poetical justice will be rendered, inasmuch as the biographical and critical notices will be much more extended. The editor is a young lady of New York, who is said to possess a nice discriminative talent, and to have a clear, forcible style of criticism.

The third and last, issued by CAREY & HART, will be a companion volume to Griswold's *Prose Writers*, "The Female Poets of England and America," illustrated with portraits engraved on steel. Meanwhile "Neal's Gazette" is establishing a gallery of literary illustrations of its own, entitled "Daguerreotype Sketches of the American Female poets." The subject of No. VI., which appears this week, is Mrs. Oakes Smith; whom this writer places with Southey's friend, the author of *Zophiel*, as among the leading female writers of the day in elegant literature. The contrast between their productions is, in "Neal's" opinion, "the difference between the glowing life-like productions of the painter, and the still perfect marble as it has received the last touch from the chiming chisel of the sculptor, both the work of a master hand; the one arouses love—the other is clothed with the stillness of devotion." It is rumored by the way that Mrs. Smith's new tragedy, "the Roman Tribute," will be first produced here. Bryant's and Willis's commendation have excited some

lively anticipation. While a few vigorous writers who have been long gradually riveting themselves upon the public mind by severe toil and quiet energy, meet at last with full recognition, it is curious to observe how rapidly new candidates are pressing forward. Female authorship would really seem to be just now a mania with the sex, both in this country and England. Our own city numbers some ten or twelve, among whom there are, perhaps, some three or four strong minds that will outlive the hot-house atmosphere of newspaper puffery, an atmosphere most dangerous to one who would win lasting reputation.

Before we leave the subject, I notice that LINDSAY & BLAKISTON have just published an enlarged and improved edition of Mrs. Tuthill's *Young Ladies' Home*. The other miscellany by Mrs. Tuthill (a juvenile publication) is issued by the same firm.

It is reported on good authority that a book on *Etiquette*, which has been some eight years in the course of preparation, by a lady who has travelled much, and is a clear observer of men and manners, will soon be given to the public. It is a volume which is not a little needed among us, as some one justly says, "American parents are so intent on rearing up good Democrats, that they forget to train gentlemen."

The great publication of this week, as regards real value, is from the pen of E. J. Peterson, Esq., entitled, "*Military Men of the Revolution, with a Narrative of the war of Independence*." W. A. LEARY, Publisher. It is a large octavo volume, of nearly five hundred pages, beautifully illustrated by eighteen fine steel engravings, and numerous well executed wood cuts. He has accomplished his task *con amore*, and I know of no one of more accurate historical knowledge, or who would be more likely to succeed in the field he has chosen. The paper upon Benedict Arnold seems to me the strongest and most able of the collection.

It is to be followed by a second volume, the "*Heroes of the War of 1812*," and the "*Heroes of the War with Mexico*," which will contain a full and reliable history of the hostilities with Mexico, connected with the biographical sketches of those of our countrymen, who have so bravely won their laurels in its sultry climate.

I had intended to speak of the magazines for May, which are just out, but have only time to allude to Mrs. Osgood's fine poem of *Eurydice*, which is the gem of Graham's magazine; it is powerful, classic, and finely finished.

A.

Works in Press.

THE Romance of the History of Louisiana, by Charles Gayarre, regarding which unique work we had a paragraph a week or two since, is now nearly ready for publication, by the Appletons. From some loose sheets we give the following extracts in anticipation of its appearance:—

"Bienville did not wait long to receive a signal proof of Cadillac's vindictive spirit, and he anticipated a manifestation of it, when summoned a second time to appear before his chief. Nor was he deceived; and when he was ushered into Cadillac's presence, that dignitary's countenance, which looked more than usually solemn and stern, indicated that he had matured his revenge for the insult he had undergone (in the refusal of his daughter). 'Sir,' said he to Bienville, 'I have received secret information that four Canadians, on their way to Illinois, have been massacred by the Natchez. You must punish

the murderers, and build a fort on the territory of that perfidious nation, to keep it in check. Take Richebourg's company of thirty-four men, fifteen sailors to man your boats, and proceed to execute my commands.' 'What!' exclaimed Bienville, 'do you really intend to send me with thirty-four men to encounter a hostile tribe that numbers eight hundred warriors?' 'A truce to your observations,' continued Cadillac, with a bitter smile, 'to hear must be to obey. I cannot dispose of a greater force. I have myself good grounds to expect being attacked by the neighboring nations, who, as I am informed, have entered into a conspiracy against us. Yet the offence committed by the Natchez must be instantly requited, or they would be emboldened into the perpetration of worse outrages. Go, then, with such means as I can give; in case of success, your merit will be greater, but if you should meet with any reverse, you will be at no loss for an excuse, and all the responsibility shall be mine. Besides, you and Richebourg have such talents and courage as will easily extricate you out of any difficulty. You are a very Hercules, and he is a perfect Theseus, in licentious propensities, at least. What is the mission I send you upon, compared with the twelve labors of the mythological hero, who, like you on this occasion, was sent forth to redress wrongs and punish crimes?' To the studied sarcasm of this set speech, Bienville made no answer. In those days of adventurous and almost mad exploits in America, in an age when the disciplinary rules of hierarchy commanded such respect and obedience, none, without disgrace, could have questioned the word of his superior, when that word was to brave danger, however foolish and reckless this exercise of authority might be. Moreover, Bienville saw that his ruin had been deliberately planned, and that remonstrance was useless. Therefore, signifying his mute assent to Cadillac's wishes, he withdrew to betake himself to the execution of the orders which he had received, and to advise with Richebourg on the best means of defeating Cadillac's malicious designs.

"Richebourg was a brave officer, full of intelligence and cool daring, whose career in Europe, as a military man, had been interrupted by several duels, which at last had forced him to leave his country. He was so amiable, so obliging, so exceedingly conciliatory, that it was difficult for one who did not know a certain eccentric peculiarity of his mind, to understand how he had come to have so many quarrels. Who more gifted than he with suavity of manners and the art of pleasing? He never was fretted by contradiction, and ever smiled at opposition. Popular among men, a favorite with women, he never allowed words of blame to fall from his lips, but on the contrary was remarkable for the good nature of his remarks on all occasions except one. How could this milk of human kindness, which was the dominant element of his disposition, be suddenly soured into offensive acidity, or turned into gall? It was passing strange! But it was nevertheless true, that, for some cause which he never explained, he had conceived the most inveterate hatred for all that smacked of philanthropy. There suddenly sprang up in his heart a sort of diseased aversion for the man, who, in his presence, either went by the name of philanthropist, or expressed sentiments which gave him a claim to that character. Richebourg, on such occasions, would listen with exemplary composure, and, treasuring up in his memory every philanthropic declaration that fell from the lips of the speaker, he would, as soon as he found the opportunity, put him to the test, as to whether his practice corresponded with his theory. Alas! few stood the test, and then Richebourg was not sparing with the words, *humbug*, *impostor*, and *hypocrite*. What was the consequence? A quarrel; and invariably the philanthropist was run through. On this inexplicable whim, on this Quixotic tilting with all pretenders to philanthropy, Richebourg's friends frequently remonstrated, but found him intractable. No answer

would be given to their observations, but he kept steadily on the same course of action. At last it became evident to them, that it was an incurable mania, a crotchet which had got into his brain and was incapable of eradication. With this imperfection they put up with good humor, on account of his many noble qualities, and he became generally known and designated as the philanthropist hater. His companions in arms, who loved him—although with some of them he had actually fought, because, either in earnest or in jest, they had hoisted the red flag that was sure to rouse the bull—had, in a joking manner, convened one day all the officers and inhabitants of Mobile and Massacre Island, and had passed with mock gravity, a resolution, which was however seriously adhered to, and in which they declared that, for the future, no one would allow himself, either directly or indirectly, to be a philanthropist within a radius of three miles of Richebourg. This secured peace; but woe to the imprudent or uninformed stranger who trespassed on that sacred ground, with the slightest visible sign of the heresy which the fanatic Richebourg held in utter abomination.

"Such was the officer who was to share with Bienville the dangers of the expedition, which was subsequently known in the annals of Louisiana, as the *first Natchez war*.

"On the 24th of April, 1716, Bienville, with the small force which had been allotted to him, encamped on an island, situated in the Mississippi, opposite the village of the Tunicas, at the distance of about eighteen leagues from the Natchez. He immediately sent a Tunica to convey to the Natchez the intelligence that he was coming to establish a factory among them, to trade in furs, and to supply them, in exchange, with all the European merchandise they might want. Bienville had been informed that the Natchez believed that the late murders they had committed on the persons of some French traders, had not been discovered, and he resolved to avail himself of this circumstance to accomplish his purposes without the risk of a collision. He affected, therefore, to have come on the most friendly errand, and gave out that he had encamped on the island merely to afford rest to his men, and to minister to the wants of some that were sick. He nevertheless took the precaution to have an intrenchment made with stakes or posts, within which he erected three log-houses. One he intended as a storehouse for his provisions and ammunition, the other as a guard-house, and the third for a prison.

"On the 27th, three Natchez came, under the ostensible purpose of complimenting Bienville, on the part of their tribe, but in reality to act as spies, and they tendered to him the calumet, that mystic pipe which the Indians use for fumigation, as the ensign of peace. Bienville refused to smoke with them, and pretended to consider himself as not treated with the respect to which he was entitled, because their chiefs had not come in person to greet him, the chief of the French. 'I see,' said he, 'that your people are not pleased with the idea of my forming a settlement on their territory, for trading with them. Otherwise they would have expressed their satisfaction in a more becoming manner. Be it so. If the Natchez are so thankful for what I meant to be a favor, I will alter my determination, and give the preference to the Tunicas, who have always shown themselves such great friends to the French.'

"After this speech, Bienville ordered the three envoys to be well feasted and treated with kindness. The next day they returned to their villages, with a Frenchman sent by Bienville, and whose mission was to address a formal invitation to the Natchez chiefs to a conference on the Tunicas Island. On this occasion, the Natchez felt greatly embarrassed, and many consultations were had on the best course to be pursued. Some were of opinion that it would be imprudent for their chiefs to put themselves in the power of the French, who might have received information of what had lately occurred, and who might have come, under the garb of

peace, to entrap their great men and wreak vengeance upon them. Others maintained that, from the circumstance of the French having come in such small number, it was evident that they were ignorant of the death of their countrymen, and did not intend to act as foes. 'That inference,' they said, 'was confirmed by the information which had been carefully collected by their spies. They had no pretext to treat the French with indignity, and therefore it was proper for the chiefs of their tribe to go to meet and escort to their villages the wise and valiant pale-faced chief, who had already visited them on preceding occasions. A different course might excite suspicion, and investigation might lead to the discovery of what it was desirable to conceal. At any rate, the chiefs, by refusing to accept Bienville's invitation, would certainly incur his displeasure, and he might, by forming a trading establishment at the Tunicas, enrich that rival nation, to the detriment of the Natchez.' These arguments prevailed, and in an evil hour for the Indian chiefs, their visit to Bienville's camp was resolved on.

"On the very day that Bienville had dismissed the three Indian envoys, he had dispatched one of his most skilful Canadian boatmen, to ascend the river, with the utmost secrecy, during the night, and proceeding to a certain distance beyond and above the villages of the Natchez, to give notice to the French, who might be coming down the river, of the danger that threatened them from the Natchez. That man was provided with a score of parchment rolls, which he was to append to trees in places where they were likely to meet the eyes of those descending the Mississippi, and which bore this inscription: 'The Natchez have declared war against the French, and M. de Bienville is encamped at the Tunicas.'

"On the 8th of May, at 10 o'clock in the morning, the Indian chiefs were seen coming, with great state, in four pirogues. The chiefs were seated under parasols, and were accompanied by twelve men, swimming. At that sight, Bienville ordered half of his men to keep themselves well armed and concealed in the guard-house, but ready for sudden action. The other half he instructed to appear without any weapons, to assist the Indians in landing, and to take charge of all their war apparel, as it were to relieve them from an encumbrance, and under the pretext that it would be improper to go in such a guise to the awaiting feast and carousal. He further commanded that eight of the principal chiefs, whom he named, should be introduced into his tent, and the rest be kept outside until his pleasure was made known. All this was carried into execution without the slightest difficulty. The chiefs entered the tent, singing and dancing, and presented the calumet to Bienville. But he waved it off with contempt, and sternly told them, that before drawing one whiff from the smoking pipe, he desired to know what they had to say, and that he was willing to listen to their harangue. At this unexpected treatment, the chiefs were highly disconcerted: they went out of the tent in dismay, and seemed, with great ceremony, to be offering their calumet to the sun. Their great priest, with extended arms, made a solemn appeal to that planet, supplicating the god to pour his rays into the heart of the pale-faced chief, to dispel the clouds which had there accumulated, and had prevented him from seeing his way and doing justice to the feelings of his red friends. After all this religious display, they returned to the tent, and again tendered their calumet to Bienville, who, tired of all these proceedings, thought proper at once to take the bull by the horns and to come out with his charges. 'Before I receive your token of amity,' said he abruptly, 'and pledge my faith in return, tell me what satisfaction you offer for the death of the Frenchmen you have murdered.' The Indians, who had really thought that Bienville knew nothing of that crime, appeared to be struck agast by this direct and sudden apostrophe: they hung down their heads and answered not. 'Let them be

carried to the prison prepared for them," exclaimed Bienville impatiently, "and let them be secured with chains, stocks, and fetters."

"On this demonstration of hostility, out came the Indians with their death-songs, which, much to the annoyance of the French, they kept repeating the whole day:—they refused all food, and appeared determined to meet their expected doom with the dauntless energy so common in that race of men. Towards evening, Bienville sent for the great chief, called 'The Great Sun,' and for two of his brothers, whose names were, 'The Stung Serpent,' and 'The Little Sun.' They were the three most influential rulers of the nation. Bienville thus addressed them: 'I know that it was not by your order, or with your consent, that the French, whose death I come to avenge, have been murdered. Therefore, your lives are safe, but I want the heads of the murderers, and of the chiefs who ordered or sanctioned the deed. I will not be satisfied with their scalps:—I wish for the very heads, in order that I may be sure that deceit has not been practised. This whole night I give you for consultation on the best mode of affording me satisfaction. If you refuse, woe to your tribe! You know the influence which I have over all the Indian nations of this country. They respect, love, and trust me, because from the day, seventeen summers ago, when I appeared among them, to the present hour, I have always been just and upright. You know that if I raise my little finger against you, and give one single war-whoop, the father of rivers will hear, and will carry it, up and down the stream, to all his tributaries. The woods themselves will prick up their leafy ears, from the big salt lake, south, to the fresh water lakes at the north, and raising their mighty voice, as when struggling with the hurricane, they will summon from the four quarters of the horizon, the children of the forests, who will crush you with their united and overwhelming powers."

"You know that I do not boast, and that those red allies will gladly march against you, and destroy the eight beautiful villages of which you are so proud, without my risking the life of one single Frenchman. Do you not remember that, in 1704, the Tchoumaqui killed a missionary and three other Frenchmen? They refused to deliver the murderers to me,—my wrath was kindled, and I said to the neighboring Indian nations: "Bienville hates the Tchoumaqui, and he who kills a Tchoumaqui is Bienville's friend." When I passed this sentence upon them, you know that their tribe was composed of three hundred families. A few months elapsed, and they were reduced to eighty! they sued for peace at last, yielded to my demands, and it was only then that the tomahawk, the arrow, and the rifle ceased to drink their blood. Justice was satisfied:—and has Bienville's justice a smaller foot and slower gait when it stalks abroad in the pursuit of the white man who has wronged the red man? No! In 1702, two Pascagoulas were killed by a Frenchman. *Blood for blood*, I said, and the guilty one, although he was one of my people, no longer lived. Thus, what I have exacted from the Indians, I have rendered unto them. Thus have I behaved, and thus have I deserved the reputation which I enjoy in the wigwams of the red men, because I never deviated from the straight path of honesty. Hence I am called by them the *arrow of uprightness and the tomahawk of justice*.

"*Measure for measure!*—this is my rule. When the Indians have invoked my arbitration between themselves, they have been invariably subject to this same rule. Thus, in 1703, two Taouachas having killed a Chickasaw, I obliged their chiefs to put them to death. *Blood will have blood*. When the Choctaws murdered two Chactiounams in 1715, I said *tooth for tooth, lives for lives*, and the satisfaction was granted. In 1707, the Mobilians, by my order, carried to the Taouachas, the head of one of their tribe in expiation of an offence of a similar nature; and in 1709, the Pascagoulas having assassinated a

Mobilian, "*an eye for an eye*" was my award, and he who was found guilty, forfeited his life. The Indians have always recognised the equity of this law, and have complied with it, not only between themselves, but between them and the French. In 1703, the Coiras made no difficulty to put to death four of their warriors, who had murdered a missionary and two other Frenchmen. I could quote many other instances,—but the cause of truth does not require long speeches, and a few words will convince an honest heart. I have done. I do not believe that you will refuse to abide by the law and custom which has always existed among the Indians, and between them and the French. There would be iniquity and danger in the breach of that law: honor, justice, peace, and safety lie in its observance. Your white brother waits for an answer."

"The Indians listened to this speech with profound attention, but made no reply, and Bienville ordered them to be remanded to prison. The next morning, at daybreak, they requested to speak to Bienville, and they were conducted to his presence. The Indian, who was the first of the chiefs by rank, addressed him in these terms: 'The voice of the Great Spirit made itself heard within us last night. We have heard his dictate, and we come to give our white brother whatever satisfaction he desires. But we wish him to observe that we, the great chiefs, being all prisoners, there is no man left behind, who has the power to accomplish the mission of bringing the heads thou demandest. Let therefore the Stung Serpent be liberated, and thy will shall be done.' To this request Bienville refused his assent, because he knew the energy of that chief, and doubted his intentions; but he consented that Little Sun should go in his brother's place."

"Five days had elapsed, when Little Sun returned, and brought three heads. After a careful examination of their features, Bienville sent again for all the chiefs, and ordering one of the heads to be flung at their feet; 'The eye of the white chief,' said he, 'sees clear through the fog of your duplicity, and his heart is full of sorrow at your conduct. This is not the head of the guilty, but of the innocent who have died for the guilty. This is not the head of Oyelape, he whom ye call the chief of the *White Clay*.' 'True,' answered the Indians, 'we do not deny thy word, but Oyelape has fled, and his brother was killed in his place.' 'If even it be so,' observed Bienville, 'this substitution cannot be accepted.'

"The next day, the 15th of May, Bienville allowed two other chiefs and the great priest to depart for their villages, to try if they would not be more successful than the Little Sun. They returned on the 25th, and informed Bienville that they could not discover the place of Oyelape's concealment, but they brought along with them some slaves and part of the goods which had belonged to the murdered Frenchmen. In the meantime, twenty-two Frenchmen and Canadians who were coming down the river in separate detachments, having seen the parchment signs posted up along its banks, by order of Bienville, had given a wide berth to the side occupied by the Natchez, and using proper precaution, had arrived safely at Bienville's camp. Thus he found himself at the head of seventy-one men, well armed, of tried hardihood, and used to Indian warfare. This was a fortunate accession to his forces; for the Indians had almost determined to make, in their canoes, a night attack upon the island, and to rescue their chiefs in the attempt. The Tunicas had given to Bienville notice of what was brewing among the Natchez, and offered forty of their best warriors to assist the French in the defence of the island. But Bienville, who, although he affected to put great trust in them, feared that they might prove traitors, refused, with apparent thankfulness, their proffered assistance, and replied that, with his small force, he could make the island good against the whole tribe of the Natchez. This manifestation of confidence in his strength, and the timely arrival of the twen-

ty-two white men, with some Illinois, no doubt prevented the Natchez from carrying their project into execution. It is probable that they were also deterred by the consideration, that the French, if hard pressed, would put their prisoners to death."

"The Great Sun, the Stung Serpent, and the Little Sun, who, perhaps, had so far delayed to make any confession, because they entertained the expectation of being rescued, having at last given up this hope, came out with a frank avowal. They maintained that they never had any previous knowledge of the intended murder of the French, and declared that four of the assassins were among Bienville's prisoners. One of them was called the Chief of the *Beard*; the other was named Alahoflechia, the Chief of the *Walnut Village*; the two others were ordinary warriors. They affirmed that these were the only guilty ones, with the exception of Oyelape, the Chief of the *White Clay*, who had fled. 'The Great Spirit,' they said, 'has blinded them, has turned their wits inside out, and they have, of their own accord, delivered themselves into thy hands. It is fortunate that it be so; otherwise, the two warriors might have fled, and the two chiefs are such favorites with the nation, that they would have successfully resisted our demand for their heads, and to give thee satisfaction would have been impossible. As it is, it shows that our Great Spirit has shaken hands with the God of the Cross, and has passed on the side of our white brothers.'

"It was then the 1st of June, and the river, which was rising daily, had overflowed the island one foot deep, and made the quarters of the French more than uncomfortable. Humidity, combined with heat, had engendered disease, and half of Bienville's men were stretched on the couch of sickness. It was then high time for him to put an end to the situation he was in. Summoning to his presence all his prisoners, with the exception of the four men who had been designated as the assassins, he said to them: 'Your people, after having invited my people to trade with them, suddenly violated the laws of hospitality, and treacherously murdered four Frenchmen who were their guests. They thought the atrocious deed would remain unknown, and that they would quietly enjoy their bloodstained plunder. But the souls of the dead spoke to me, and I came, and I invited you to my camp, as you had invited the French to your villages, and you became my guest, as they had been yours, and I rose upon you, as you rose upon them. Measure for measure. But I shall not butcher you, as you butchered them. You killed the innocent and the confiding—I shall kill only the treacherous and the guilty. Who can say this is not justice? Now let us bury the hatchet of war. I am satisfied with and believe your last declarations. Hear, then, on what conditions I consent to release you and grant you peace. You will swear to put to death, as soon as possible, Oyelape, the Chief of the *White Clay*, and you will bring his head to the French officer whom I shall station among you. You will consent, also, to my putting to death the two chiefs and the two warriors who are in my hands. You will restore every object that you may ever have taken from the French; for what has been lost or wasted, you will force your people to pay the equivalent in furs and provisions. You will oblige them to cut two thousand five hundred stakes of acacia wood, thirteen feet long by a diameter of ten inches, and to convey the whole to the bank of the Mississippi, at such a spot as it will please the French to erect a fort; and furthermore, you will bind yourselves to furnish us, as a covering for our buildings, with the barks of three thousand trees. This is to be expected before the first day of July; and above all, you will also swear, never, and under no pretext or color whatever, to entertain the slightest commercial or friendly relations with the British, whom you know to be the eternal enemies of the French.'

"The chiefs assented to these terms, swore by the sun that they would, for the future, be the

best friends of the French, and urged Bienville to smoke the pipe of peace. Bienville knew well what to think of these hollow protestations, but affected to believe in the return of the Natchez to the sentiments they professed. He refused, however, to smoke, because he considered that the treaty of peace would not be valid, until ratified in a meeting of the whole nation, but he dismissed all the Indians, with the exception of the Stung Serpent, the Little Sun, and the four criminals who were doomed to death. With the departing Indians, he sent Aid-major Pailloux, accompanied by three soldiers, to be present at the ratification of the treaty. On the 7th of June, nine old men came, with great ceremony and pomp, to give to Bienville official information of the expected ratification."

Poetry.

SPIRITUAL BEAUTY.

THAT pale and shadowy beauty,
It haunts my vision now.
The genius radiating
From the dazzling marble brow—
The high and saintly fervor,
The meek and child-like faith,
The trusting glance, which sayeth,
More than mortal accent saith;
They haunt me when the night-winds swell,
And daylight cannot break their spell.

I see the blue eye shining
Through the lashes as they fall,
An inward glory speaking
To the inward life of all—
A ray that was illumined
At the far celestial light,
And burns through mist and shadow,
A beacon ever bright,
Serene, seraphic, and sublime—
And changeless with the flight of time.

A faint, transparent rose-light
Is trembling on the cheek,
And ling'ring on the pale lip—
A glow that seems to speak.
It wavers like the taper—
Dim-lit at forest shrine—
When night-winds whisper to it:
It breathes of the Divine,
With its ethereal mystery,
Too fragile of the earth to be.

Her grace is as a shadow;
As undefinable—
Wedded to every motion thus,
And rarely beautiful.
Untaught, and all unconscious,
It hath a voice to me
Which eloquently speaketh
Of inward harmony—
Of Soul and Sense together swayed—
To the First Soul an off'ring made.

That pale and shadowy beauty,
It seemed an inward thing;
A spiritual vision—
A chaste imagining:
Not all in form or feature,
The fairy phantom dwelt,
But like the air of heaven,
Was yet less seen than felt;
A presence the true heart to move
To praise, and prayer, and holy Love.

E. J. B.

The Fine Arts.

NATIONAL ACADEMY EXHIBITION.

COMMENCING in the regular order of the catalogue, we find Mr. Rossiter's name attached to a very prominent picture, apparently a fancy portrait of a *Mother and Children* (1). It cannot fail to arrest attention, from the gaudiness of its coloring, but it will not, we apprehend, convey any sensation of pleasure,

even to the most ignorant eye. However little the observer may understand the principles of color, or be able to explain the reason why some pictures appear harmonious and others discordant, yet he cannot fail to feel that this is the very insanity of coloring, and that both nature and good taste are here violated, and that the eye is distracted and the mind annoyed so long as he continues before it. Mr. Rossiter has studied much abroad, and has evidently set up Paul Veronese as his model, endeavoring to gain in his works the brilliant daylight effect for which this master stands so pre-eminent. But while he has sought for the brilliancy and force of color, he has lost the exquisite harmony and purity which distinguish the works of his great prototype. Mr. Rossiter's chief fault seems to be his over-estimation of his reflections; they are scattered all over the picture, in all sorts of impossible places, oftentimes more powerful than the lights, and helping to give that metallic look which, in color, is as unpleasant as metallic tones in music. He draws carelessly, because hastily; the figure of the boy in this picture is full of bad drawing. So in *The Blonde, Brown, and Brunette* (8), which is not likely to add much to the artist's reputation. Besides being badly composed, it has the appearance of having been painted, especially in the hands and arms, from the lay figure. *The First Visit to the Opera* (199) is a caricature so utterly wanting in refinement that we wonder it should have been admitted in the exhibition. We are not unaware of Mr. Rossiter's great talents, knowledge, and industry in painting, and we do not wish to do him any injustice. We consider that he has much in him, but that he has unfortunately pursued a wrong course in his artistic education, and that his ambition has outstripped his judgment, so that he has now sunk into an almost hopeless mannerism in the very commencement of his career. We hope that these habits are not so formed but that finding them wrong he may abandon them, and we counsel as the first steps towards a radical reform,—sobriety, carefulness, and the further cultivation of his judgment and good taste.

Mr. Mason's landscape, *Lara's Glassy Stream* (2), is of a class that we hope, ere long, to see banished from our exhibitions. It is the production of a mind that has evidently dealt more with the works of other men than with those of nature; more familiar with prints from the old masters, and from that bad school of landscape painting that followed close after Wilson and Gainsborough in England, than with the real living world that he can look out upon from his window, but which he apparently obstinately shuts his eyes against. Let him try his hand at nature. One little truthful study of a single tree is worth a thousand such "compositions" as this, which neither touch the heart nor please the eye.

A little sketch (6), by Mr. Crane, has much more of the freshness of nature than the pictures he has painted since his residence abroad. It is feeble, but we speak of it to commend its truthfulness, and to regret that this merit should have been so neglected by the artist in his later works.

The Portrait of Gov. Wright (3), by Mr. Whitehorse, has been already so roughly handled by the critics, that we feel almost prompted to say something in its praise. We certainly shall not make it the target for "small wit," since the pitiful economy of those who adjudged him the commission, and their

evident ignorance and stupidity (we will not even call it bad taste), present a much fairer front for the shafts of ridicule. The portraits of our Governors form the only picture gallery which belongs to the public, and we can reasonably ask, for our own sake and that of the generations of a hundred years hence, that they should be the best that the artists of the time can furnish. We are no politicians; but we truly believe that the name of Gov. Bouek, familiar as it is to us now, will be better known a century hence, from its connexion with Elliot's portrait of last year, than from any of the numerous causes that make it popular at this present day. How many names have Titian, Vandyke, and Reynolds thus immortalized that would have perished otherwise! Oh! then, ye City Fathers, if you would have your idols immortal, and not make yourselves foolishly so, have them translated into paint and canvas, "by some of the best hands," and do not grudge the artist "the fair day's wages for the fair day's work." Mr. Whitehorse's other pictures do not call for much notice from us. *The Descendant of the Royal Stuarts* (152) has apparently come so far, that the greater part of her body has settled into her shoes. It is utterly deficient in shape and comeliness.

Mr. Grennewald's landscapes are admirably drawn, but are very deficient in color. A cold, grey tone pervades them all. Even the *Woods on Fire* (9), which might naturally be supposed to need the employment of much warm color, is unpleasantly cold. If the artist would study nature's greens and rich browns, and endeavor to transfer them in all their freshness to his canvas, his pictures would gain much in beauty and truth. We seldom find such careful drawing among our landscape painters, and we regret that the attraction of fine color should not be added to it.

The Blind Pilgrim (24), by Mr. Fisher, a Dublin artist, is the main attraction of this end of the saloon, and is expressive of much talent in the painter. There is great feeling for beauty and grace, notwithstanding the errors in proportion and drawing, and the color and chiaro-oscuro are well managed. The face of the girl, who apparently describes the appearance of the Holy City to the Pilgrim, is in half-tint, save where the slight line of light strikes upon the forehead, and is very beautifully painted. The hands are well done and admirably contrasted; the withered palm of age by the soft, pulpy hand of youth. It is a very pleasing picture, but one that will not repay any deep study: it is not a great picture, but its qualities are of such a character as to make it generally considered by the mass of visitors, as the gem of the exhibition.

Of Mr. Huntington, we regret to have to speak in any other than terms of commendation, but his pictures, though perhaps somewhat better than those of last year, are yet so far below what he has accomplished in years past, that we almost despair of ever again seeing a picture from his hand worthy of the reputation he has acquired. Five years ago if you gave Mr. H. a commission for an historical picture, you might have had to wait a year, but when it came at last, it was admirable in every part. The painter had studied the work carefully and had exhausted upon it all his powers: it was sure to be the best he could do at the time. Now he surprises you by sending home your picture at the end of a month or two, and has painted some half dozen portraits beside. This will never do; such a man must not throw himself away in this manner. He has better feeling for painting

than almost any other artist in the country; fine feeling for color, composition, and pictorial effect, but he must not depend, as he evidently does, on his feeling alone. It will not allow him ever to get a great way out of the truth, but unless he brings knowledge and careful study to its aid, his pictures will never be anything but finished sketches. The drawing, the perspective, and the composition are always just so far from the right, as to betray the reason of the want of exactness. We would counsel him, in the next historical picture he paints, to study carefully every part of it; let it be painted on "scientific principles," let him carefully cartoon his picture and lay out a ground plan of it, if need be; he would then avoid the errors in the perspective of the figures, so apparent in the *Child bringing flowers to the Princess Elizabeth* (14). We do not believe that in adhering closely to the rules and to exact drawing, he would necessarily lose a particle of his fine feeling—indeed he has himself proved it otherwise; and he could then have the satisfaction of knowing that so far as correctness in drawing and perspective went he would be beyond the reach of cavil—a satisfaction which we hardly think he can feel now—for were he put on his book-oath, we know it would be hard for him to say how many feet from the bottom of the foreground stands the figure which is ascending the steps in the picture we have just named. Let him study his figures carefully from the life, and we should then escape such lay-figure looking personages as the Princess Elizabeth. There is a want of Nature here, too apparent. In color he has nothing or little to learn; his fine sense in this respect will never betray him. But color, though it be first, is not everything, and the highest excellence can only be attained by uniting with it the other great requisites of art. He has painted his draperies admirably, and the accessories and backgrounds are well managed. Beautiful broken color is to be found in his picture of the *Lady Jane Grey disputing with Feckenham* (38). This is much the best composition he exhibits; yet it possesses the faults we have mentioned, and there is a want of elevation in expression. *Christian Faith* (186) is a most beautiful head, full of sentiment and expression; a head that one can stand and look upon for hours and find the better feelings of his nature touched by its calm and holy influence. We forget before it the defects of drawing, our critical faculties become absorbed, and are forgotten in our nature.

In the pictures of Mr. G. A. Baker, we find this year much improvement, but we would counsel him to avoid imitating the manner of Mr. Page, at least until time shall have tested its truth, and the world of art is prepared to receive it as the only proper way of painting. Mr. Page's genius would invest any manner with much that is really beautiful, but his imitators are likely rather to steal the dust and ashes than the Promethean fire that animates his works. In *The Annual* (13) we see too much of brilliant burning red shining though the outer surface of the picture; the veins are not filled with the rich purple life-blood of nature, but with some liquid of an orange hue. The head and arm, particularly the latter, are well drawn, but the bust is rather perverse in its anatomy. There is a great want of some strong cool color to make the picture pleasing to the eye. There is much that is excellent in *Expectation* (178); the shadows are very clear and transparent, but it is hard, and the action of the uplifted arm is stiff and awkward. *Shylock and Jessica*

(297) is Mr. Baker's best picture, and in character and expression is well conceived. It had been better had the old man's cap been somewhat idealized; there is too much the paper hat of the bricklayer about it for a picture of Shylock.

In the landscapes of Mr. T. A. Richards, we find the same want of color as in his pictures of former years. His palette wants reforming. White and black are now too prominent and profuse; he must remember that black is for shadows, not for tints. In *Quietude* (16) there is more color than in his other works, yet it is not the right sort of color; there is too much use of gaudy and unpleasant yellows. Study the color of nature carefully; paint fewer pictures; and let each be as nearly a perfect transcript of natural scenery and objects, as possible. This is good advice, Mr. Richards; take it, and profit by it.

There are several pictures in the exhibition by the Messrs. Audubon, painted separately and in conjunction, which, with the peculiar judgment of the hanging committee, have been thrust into very prominent places upon the walls. They are mostly animal subjects, treated in the most unimaginative manner possible. The outward texture is wrought out with the most patient labor, and the most minute attention to all the accidents of curl and gloss; but we get nothing but the surface of the animal, the hide rather than the horse, the smooth fur rather than the cat, and the deer-skin rather than the deer. We have no idea given but that of texture; the true animal type is lost entirely. The best of the pictures is that of *Puss on a Hunting Expedition* (278), in which we find more of the expression and character of the muscular and living animal than in the *Buck's Last Run* (82) or the *Startled Deer* (132), which are almost destitute of any merit save that of patient industry. We think a few broad, masterly touches from the hand of the artist who felt the true character of the subject, would convey a far better idea of color, expression, and action, if united with good drawing, than this laborious imitation of glossy hide which leaves entirely undeveloped the character and inner life of the animal.

TO THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY DRAWN BY HERSELF.

I MISSED a face that once would haunt my dreams,
A face and form of loveliness and light,
And sorrow'd ever when each morrow's beams
Brought back the sense of what I missed each night.
Meanwhile, with dreamy pencil, Ernestine,
Unconscious that her radiant self she drew,
That missing portrait in my visions seen,
To mock me here upon the canvas threw.

Recent Publications.

An Illustrated History of the Hat, from the Earliest Ages to the Present Time. By Genin, Hatter, 214 Broadway.

IN Paris, a literary man is now your most accepted political *ouvrier*, and it seems not unnatural, therefore, that the artisan should turn litterateur. This amusing and really curious brochure shows, at least, that citizen Genin can almost provide for the inside of the head as well as for its externals. We remember long since—upon seeing the representation of a premium hat on the head of a fishing figure copied from the walls of Pompeii, and meeting with another in a group of mediæval figures among the illuminations of one of Froissart's MSS.—thinking that D'Israeli ought to have devoted a chapter to the subject. The theme belongs equally to the antiquarian, the litterateur, and the fashion-monger, and Mr. Genin has whimsically united the characteristics of all in his mode of treating it.

There is one mark of "progress," however, in this whimsical treatise, which has our warmest approval. It is, that the hat is no longer regarded by the philosophic writer as "a fixed fact." The hat is to be studied in reference to its surroundings—its adaptability—not as an arbitrary piece of costume. In a word, we are not to decide that the Doric or the Corinthian capital must needs be placed upon every column; but the true hat-artist is to make the hat to suit the man instead of taking it for granted that every man will suit the peculiar kind of hat which stupid people may insist is the fashion of the day. In a word, "individuality" being the watchword of the day, individuality is to be consulted by every independent person, in the matter of his head gear. Twenty or thirty years ago, every portrait was painted in a blue coat and white neck-cloth; now the artist always studies the characteristic dress of his sitter, with whom he consults accordingly. Thus, hereafter, is it to be with the hatter, who is expected to show the skill of his profession, not by measuring off so many inches of stove-pipe, as fashion may determine the length, and fit them mechanically to any head, but by setting off the phrenology of each individual "sitter" to the best advantage, and making the "air" of his head harmonize with his general mien and bearing.

If in any future edition of this work an appendix should be added, treating of the comparative advantages of beaver and silk hats, the latter should have the advantage of the old saw, "*ne plus ultra*," "*seek no fur there*."

The Dark River: an Allegory. By the Rev. Edward Monro. Gen. Prot. Epis. S. S. Union, 20 John st., 1848, 24mo. pp. 164.

The Old Man's Home. By the Rev. Wm. Adams. The same, 1847, 24mo. pp. 108.

THERE is a great deal too much trash published under the specious pretext of affording moral and religious instruction to children, and the drivel that would not be tolerated in the pulpit or lecture-room by an adult audience, is thought excellent pap for the young. It seems sufficient for a book to be what the old women of both sexes call "good," i. e. to contain nothing immoral or irreligious, to secure for it a favorable reception from well-meaning but weak-minded persons. To be sure, this easy-going style of composition saves a world of trouble, doubtless; for, as it gives no opportunity or encouragement to a child to think for itself, and makes no appeal to the imaginative faculty, it prevents untoward or perplexing questions, which it might not be easy to answer; and the youthful mind is fed with unexceptionable moral precepts conveyed in the dullest possible manner, and affording no stimulus to a sound and healthy state of religious sentiment. But avoiding all this chaff, this mass of stagnant piety, some few really valuable works may be found, in which the allegorical style of narrative is employed with much effect, and wholesome instruction is indirectly imparted in a manner which cannot fail to make a right impression. Among those few may be placed the books whose titles stand at the head of this paragraph.

The *Dark River* is an allegory, or rather collection of allegories, designed to show that in the hour of death—when the *Dark River* which separates this life from that which is to come is about to be crossed—the remembrance of a well-spent life can alone infuse composure and hope into the sinking soul. In plan and idea it is not unlike *The Shadow of the Cross*, which we noticed a few numbers back, and which has long been a standard among works of a religious cast for the use of children. It would have been better if the author had assumed a more cheerful and encouraging tone; for the child-reader will almost believe that to virtue is allotted all the misery, to vice all the happiness that is to be found in this life. The tints are of too sombre a hue; pain, and difficulty, and sorrow, stand forth in too much relief, and in making them so prominent, he has missed much of the salutary effect which his book might otherwise have

produced. In other respects we deem it an unexceptionable work, and one that will be of good service in the cause of moral and religious instruction. The conversational and narrative parts are happily intermingled, and it will be found both suggestive and impressive. It is tastefully got up, and illustrated with engravings from designs by Chapman.

The *Old Man's Home* is by the author of "The Shadow of the Cross," and may well take place by its side as a companion volume. The title plainly indicates the subject. Devoid of the slightest approach to rant or turgidity, the touching and simple story is told with much purity and grace of style; and the interest, which is early excited, is sustained without flagging to the very last page. Let a book like this be put in the hands of a child, and we have no fear of the result. Weir has contributed the designs for the two engravings which are inserted.

English Grammar. By William Cobbett. 19mo. pp. 413, New York: John Doyle, 1846.

A NEAT reprint of one of the author's most popular works, and perhaps the best English grammar in the list of elementary books of the kind.

It is written in the form of a series of familiar letters to his son, and is expressly intended for the use "of schools and of young persons in general; but more especially for the use of soldiers, sailors, apprentices, and plough-boys." It is consequently as direct, perspicuous, and plain as a compilation of this nature could be; and, although devoid of anything like scholastic pretension, it is a thoroughly intelligible and useful little treatise. The abstract character of grammar is popularized, as far as it can be, and by one, himself one of the raciest of popular political journalists.

We believe it was Lord Thurlow who said that Cobbett was the only political journalist worth reading, among his contemporaries; and Hazlitt has painted, in a vivid portrait (see *Spirit of the Age*), the fresh, vivacious, idiomatic genius of this remarkable man.

Cobbett, one of the people, was just the man to write a popular book; in early life a private soldier, and afterwards a skilful and industrious farmer, he knew how to teach and to write to soldiers and plough-boys. He has disclosed some egregious blunders (chiefly defects in regard to exactness and perspicuity) in the works of some eminent writers, though not always a safe critic on themes above the standard of his own attainments, and out of the reach of his sympathies. He had no feeling for high poetry or elegant art. But he had a vigorous pen in depicting the hollowiness, and affectations, and falsehoods of public men. His political predictions were too marked, and his personal prejudices too bitter, not to intrude themselves even into a treatise on grammar. His political hatreds give an edge to his style, and enliven his pages; and he brings upon the stand the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh against themselves, not only as evidences on questions of style and composition, but also of their own incapacity and misconduct in office.

Cobbett's French grammar is as good as the above, and is full of piquant episodes, personal and political.

The Young Ladies' Home. By Mrs. Louisa C. Tuthill. Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 12mo. pp. 330.

WHEN a young lady has been "finished" at a fashionable school, she is supposed by the good-natured of her own sex, and the sentimental and beardless of the other, to have attained the highest degree of perfection, and to be the happy possessor of the utmost refinement of manner, with an equally superlative amount of mental cultivation. Mrs. Tuthill, however, entertains a very different opinion, and has put forth this volume to show how much remains to be done at home after the schoolmistress has completed her task. The amount of "unfinished business"

is really startling; it positively shocks our sensibilities; and must be an effectual damper upon the spirits of any sanguine Miss who thinks she has discarded her studies and her books for ever. To speak seriously, there is much good advice in this little book; much that has been said before, and of which no one will dispute the soundness; but we do not see the peculiar advantage to be derived from postponing any action thereon till the technical schooling is laid aside, and we are sure that sensible parents and teachers do not defer it; hence the title of "Young Ladies' Home" is more distinctive than appropriate. But as advice, though oft repeated, is not always heeded, if the authoress succeeds in obtaining a hearing in homes where education in its larger meaning has been neglected, she will have performed an acceptable service in re-enforcing these time-honored truths.

Publishers' Circular.

INDEXES.

NEXT to actual knowledge, the best thing is to know where to find it. Scarcely any task is more vexatious than that of searching for information we have seen somewhere, but where we cannot tell. A vast amount of the most valuable intelligence on every literary and scientific subject is contained in periodicals. They occupy a place both in England and this country which is to be filled in no other way; but as works of reference they are of comparatively little value, from their miscellaneous character and the want of general Indexes. The value of "Silliman's Journal of Science" is more than doubled by the elaborate Index that has recently been issued by its publishers. To several of the most valuable Reviews partial Indexes have been published. The North American, now having completed its sixty-sixth volume, has an Index to the first twenty-five only. The last thirty-seven volumes of the Edinburgh have no Index. To the Westminster, Foreign Quarterly, British and Foreign Quarterly, American Quarterly, Southern, Democratic, American (Whig), and many other valuable Reviews, no Indexes have ever been published. To none of the American Magazines and to none of the English, except the Monthly and the Gentleman's, has a general Index been attempted. We have received a Circular containing the Prospectus of a work, the object of which is to supply this long felt deficiency, and as such, promises great assistance to the student and the professional man. Literary men should not let this opportunity escape them, but at once leave their names at their respective booksellers.

The following is an extract from the Circular, which more fully indicates the range of the work:—

"The Society of 'Brothers in Unity,' of Yale College, is preparing for its Library 'AN ALPHABETICAL INDEX TO SUBJECTS TREATED IN THE REVIEWS AND OTHER PERIODICALS TO WHICH NO INDEXES HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED.' The Periodicals that have been carefully examined, and referred to, in the work amount in all to five hundred and fifty volumes.

"The plan of the work is to furnish a concise and convenient reference to the contents of these volumes, and to this end, generally but a single reference is made to an article, under the most prominent *Word* of its *Subject*. It is termed an 'INDEX,' but the large number of volumes referred to, shows that the term is not used with its technical meaning in Bibliography; a reference to the minutiae of each article would so increase the size of the Work as to render the whole undertaking impracticable. It does not claim to notice every article, but only such as will be of utility to a College community like ours. The light and fictitious articles

in the Magazines have generally been omitted, as their titles would give no clue to their substance.

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